

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9320

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ATTENTION: ANDREW, IO/HDC

EHRlich, OIH/DHEW

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TBIO SWEL WHO

SUBJECT: CABLE NO. 2 ON WHO EXPERT MEETING ON NEW JERSEY
INFLUENZA

REF: A) STATE 086570, B) GENEVA 2821

1. IN FURTHER RESPONSE REFTEL A, WHO ADG BERNARD PRESIDED AT
OPENING OF SUBJECT MEETING APRIL 7. ACKNOWLEDGING THERE WAS
"MUCH CONCERN ALL OVER THE WORLD ABOUT THE NEW STRAIN OF INFLUENZA
A AT FORT DIX IN FEBRUARY OF THIS YEAR AND ITS ANTIGENIC RELATION-
SHIP TO THE VIRUS PRESUMED TO HAVE CAUSED THE 1918 PANDEMIC",
DR BERNARD INFORMED THE TWENTY-TWO PARTICIPANTS FROM FIFTEEN COUNT-
RIES AND HONG KONG (AUSTRALIA, CANADA, CHILE, FRG, FRANCE, GDR,
HUNGARY, JAPAN, NETHERLANDS, PRC, SWEDEN, SWITZERLAND, USSR,
UK, US) THEY HAD BEEN INVITED TO ADVISE WHO ON FURTHER MEASURES
TO TAKE TO MAKE SURE ANY SPREAD OF SWINE INFLUENZA-LIKE VIRUS IS
DETECTED IMMEDIATELY, AND TO ADVISE ON HOW TO DEAL WITH THE VIRUS
"IF IT APPEARS LIKELY TO OCCUR". APART FROM QUESTIONS OF EFFICACY
AND SAFETY PERTAINING TO THE VACCINE STRAIN, A REVIEW OF THE
RELEVANT EPIDEMIOLOGICAL AND BIOLOGICAL FACTS AVAILABLE, HE
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POINTED OUT, IS NECESSARY TO ASSIST COUNTRIES IN ARRIVING AT DE-

CISIONS, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT VARYING CIRCUMSTANCES IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES.

2. PRESENT SITUATION ON INFLUENZA IN WORLD

DURING THE SEASON NOW ENDING, IN THE NORTHERN HEMISPHERE THERE WAS AN INFLUENZA WAVE MOSTLY ASSOCIATED WITH A/VICTORIA REPORTED BY THIRTY-SEVEN COUNTRIES. THESE WERE MODERATE EPIDEMICS AFFECTING WHOLE COUNTRIES (OR PARTS). DURING THE NEXT INFLUENZA SEASON, OUTBREAKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE A/VICTORIA STRAIN ARE EXPECTED TO OCCUR IN AREAS WHICH HAVE NOT YET SUFFERED FROM THIS TYPE OF INFLUENZA. IN ADDITION TO A/VICTORIA, STRAINS OF A/ENGLAND/864/75 WERE FOUND IN SMALL NUMBERS IN SEVERAL COUNTRIES (ENGLAND) A FEW OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, NORTHERN AFRICA, SINGAPORE, KOREA AND JAMACA) AND STRAINS OF A/TOKYO/1/75 IN JAPAN (LESS NUMEROUS THAN A/VICTORIA) AND FRANCE. STRAINS OF A/PORT CHALMERS/1/73 (SIMILAR TO THAT OF THE 1974/75 INFLUENZA SEASON) WERE FOUND, IN ADDITION TO A/VICTORIA, IN GUATEMALA AND BRAZIL. ONE CASE WAS DETECTED IN CANADA. IN THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE, THE INFLUENZA SEASON STARTED EARLIER THAN USUAL AND A/VICTORIA STRAINS WERE FOUND IN NEW ZEALAND, CHILE, SOUTH AFRICA AND FIJI.

3. REVIEW OF NEW JERSEY INFLUENZA VIRUS IN MAN IN U.S.

A SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN RESPRATORY DISEASE INFECTION WAS OBSERVED AT FORT DIX, NEW JERSEY, IN JANUARY 1976. A FATAL CASE OF VIRAL PNEUMONIA WITHOUT BACTERIAL COMPLICATION OCCURRED ON FEBRUARY 4. ELEVEN ISOLATIONS WERE MADE INITIALLY, SEVEN OF WHICH WERE IDENTIFIED AS A/VICTORIA/3/75-LIKE. THE REMAINING FOUR (INCLUDING THE ISOLATE FROM THE FATAL CASE) WERE IDENTIFIED ON FEBRUARY 13 BY CDC ATLANTA "AS CLOSELY RELATED TO SWINE INFLUENZA-LIKE VIRUS HSW1N1. THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE ISOLATIONS WAS CONFIRMED IN TWO LABORATORIES BY THE RE-ISOLATION OF THE VIRUS FROM THE ORIGINAL SPECIMENS. AN ADDITIONAL HSW1N1 VIRUS WAS REPORTED SEVERAL DAYS LATER. FURTHER VIRUS SURVEILLANCE YIELDED ONLY A/VICTORIA ISOLATES.

4. WHO ACTION IN RESPONSE TO NEW JERSEY OUTBREAK

U.S. AND WHO HEALTH AUTHORITIES AGREED ON FEBRUARY 16 TO UNCLASSIFIED

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MAKE AVAILABLE ALL INFORMATION ON THE FORT DIX OUTBREAK. FURTHER INFORMATION WAS LATER PROVIDED IN THE WEEKLY EPI-DEMOIOLOGICAL RECORD AND IN CIRCULAR LETTERS TO NATIONAL INFLUENZA CENTERS ADKING THEM TO REINFORCE SURVEILLANCE. INACTIVATED ANTIGENS A/MAYO CLINIC/103/74 AND SPECIFIC ANTISERA WERE DISTRIBUTED WITHIN THREE WEEKS TO ALL NATIONAL INFLUENZA CENTERS. A RECOMBINANT STRAIN X.53 WAS MADE AVAILABLE ON MARCH 24 FOR VACCINE PRODUCTION, AND ANOTHER

RECOMBINANT N1B-3 ON APRIL 6. BOTH HAVE BEEN PREPARED BY RECOMBINING THE SURFACE ANTIGENS OF THE NEW JERSEY STRAIN WITH THE PR8 ATTENUATED VIRUS.

5. APPROACHES BY COUNTRIES IN RESPECT TO VACCINATION

A) USA. SEROLOGICAL SURVEYS INDICATE MOST PERSONS OVER FIFTY HAVE ANTIBODIES TO THE A/NEW JERSEY/76 INFLUENZA VIRUS, SUGGESTING THAT THEY HAVE SOME DEGREE OF PROTECTION. SINCE, HOWEVER, THIS AGE GROUP HAS CONSISTENTLY BEEN ONE WITH THE HIGHEST RISK OF FATAL COMPLICATIONS FROM INFLUENZA, IT IS CONSIDERED A PRIME TARGET FOR RECEIVING A/NEW JERSEY-TYPE VACCINES.

B) CANADA. CANADA WILL ALSO VACCINATE ON A LARGE SCALE AGAINST THE A/NEW JERSEY STRAIN, BUT SOMEWHAT DIFFERENTLY FROM THE U.S. AS FOLLOWS: 1) VACCINATION OF HIGH RISK GROUPS WITH A BIVALENT VACCINE (A/NEW JERSEY AND A/VICTORIA); 2) VACCINATION OF PERSONS BETWEEN THE AGES OF TWENTY AND FIFTY (HIGHEST RISK: 20-40 YEARS OF AGE) WITH A MONOVALENT VACCINE (A/NEW JERSEY), WITH PRIORITY BEING GIVEN TO THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR MAINTENANCE OF ESSENTIAL SERVICES; 3) A/NEW JERSEY VACCINE NOT TO BE RECOMMENDED AS ROUTINE FOR INFANTS AND CHILDREN BECAUSE OF INCREASED INCIDENCE AND SEVERITY OF ADVERSE REACTIONS TO THE VACCINE IN THOSE UNDER SIXTEEN.

C) OTHER COUNTRIES. IN MANY COUNTRIES NO DECISION HAS BEEN MADE THUS FAR ON PRODUCTION AND USE OF A/NEW JERSEY-TYPE VACCINE. SOME COUNTRIES HAVE UNDERTAKEN PRELIMINARY ACTION WITH REGARD TO INCORPORATING A/NEW JERSEY-TYPE VACCINE WITH CURRENTLY RECOMMENDED VACCINES AND TO RESTRICTING VACCINATION TO HIGH-RISK GROUPS. THE UK HAS PROPOSED A TRIVALENT VACCINE CONSISTING OF A/VICTORIA /3/75 (400 IU DOSE), A/NEW JERSEY/76 (DOSAGE NOT ESTABLISHED) AND B/HONG KONG/5/72 (300 87 \$9 3).

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THE USSR AND SOME OTHER COUNTRIES HAVE AIMED THEIR EFFORTS THUS FAR AT BUILDING UP A SUFFICIENT SUPPLY OF THE INACTIVATED MONOVALENT A/NEW JERSEY-TYPE VACCINE IN ORDER TO BE PREPARED FOR EPIDEMICS WITH A/NEW JERSEY-LIKE STRAINS, IN CASE THERE IS EVIDENCE OF FURTHER SPREAD OF THE VIRUS.

6. COMMENT.

THE ABOVE-REPORTED INFORMATION ALONG WITH THE "CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS" REPORTED IN GENEVA 2821 WILL MAKE UP THE WHO OFFICIAL REPORT, STILL IN PREPARATION. CABLE NUMBER THREE WILL GIVE A WHO PRESS RELEASE IN CONTRAST TO THE OFFICIAL REPORT, THE LIST OF PARTICIPANTS AT THE MEETING, AND A TRANSLATION OF A SWISS FRENCH NEWSPAPER ACCOUNT OF THE WHO MEETING THAT APPEARED IN THE GENEVA WEEKEND PRESS. ABRAMS

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